

**A GUIDE TO
THE BEST PROGRAM
for BEGINNING TEACHERS
2006 - 2007**



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INTRODUCTION

The Beginning Educator Support and Training (BEST) Program is a comprehensive induction program of support and assessment for beginning teachers. Beginning teachers must successfully complete BEST Program requirements in order to be eligible for the provisional educator certificate.

The purposes of *A Guide to the BEST Program for Beginning Teachers* are:

- to provide beginning teachers with critical information relating to BEST Program requirements;
- to describe the rights and responsibilities of beginning teachers participating in the BEST Program; and
- to delineate the types of support that are available to beginning teachers to meet these requirements.

Why is the BEST Program so important?

It is the responsibility of the state to license individuals in professions that significantly impact public health and/or welfare. Therefore, an assessment of an individual's competence assures the public that those who are licensed have attained the necessary skills to perform their job (e.g., medical personnel, pilots, lawyers, accountants, etc.). The BEST portfolio assessment is designed to elicit evidence that a beginning teacher has demonstrated standards of teaching that promote student learning.

The mission of the BEST Program is to ensure that every Connecticut student is taught by a highly qualified and competent teacher. The BEST Program helps ensure that all beginning teachers have opportunities to strengthen their knowledge of subject matter and instructional strategies, enhance their understanding of students as learners and begin a process of lifelong learning and professional growth.

The promotion of high standards for teachers has been an integral component of Connecticut's education reform agenda since the mid-1980s. The Education Enhancement Act of 1986 was highly successful in raising standards for teacher education and licensing as well as increasing teacher salaries to among the highest in the nation. This "balanced equation" of higher teacher salaries matched by increased professional standards has been highly successful in attracting more academically qualified individuals into Connecticut's schools.

Connecticut has gained national recognition as a leader in promoting teacher quality through the BEST Program. Connecticut's participation in the Interstate New Teacher Assessment and Support Consortium (INTASC), whose members include state educational agencies responsible for the licensing of beginning teachers, has helped promote a portfolio-based system of support and assessment in other states based upon the Connecticut model. Connecticut has been cited in national publications such as *Education Week*, the *Washington Post* and *Business Week*. In addition, the BEST Program received the Education Commission of the States Award for Outstanding Innovation in Education in 2000.

Connecticut's Definition of Effective Teaching Practice

Connecticut's Common Core of Teaching (CCT) defines the knowledge, skills and competencies that teachers need to attain in order to ensure that students learn and perform at high levels. The *CCT* is used across the career continuum of teachers:

- to ensure that prospective teachers are knowledgeable about effective teaching practice prior to recommendation for initial certification by a Connecticut institution of higher education;
- to evaluate the competence of beginning teachers assessed for certification purposes through the Beginning Educator Support and Training (BEST) Program; and
- to serve as the foundation upon which local districts establish their teacher evaluation and professional development plans.

The *CCT* includes **(1) foundational skills and competencies** that are common to all teachers from prekindergarten through Grade 12 and **(2) discipline-specific professional standards** that represent the knowledge, skills and competencies that are unique for teachers of elementary education, English language arts, history/social studies, mathematics, middle grades, music, physical education, science, special education, visual arts and world languages.

The BEST teaching portfolios have been designed to assess the foundational skills as well as discipline-specific standards identified in *Connecticut's Common Core of Teaching*.

The complete CCT can be found at the end of this guide in Appendix 10.

The Link Between Effective Teaching and Improved Student Learning

We believe that student learning is directly related to teacher competence and that teachers, like students, must be continual learners. As a result, the central focus of BEST Program professional development offerings for beginning teachers (e.g., both web-based and regional Beginning Teacher Seminars) is to provide meaningful learning experiences which enable beginning teachers to continuously raise their expectations for their students' achievement and for their teaching. In addition, these sessions provide practical strategies to enhance the capabilities of beginning teachers to increase student learning.

Beginning teachers need to be knowledgeable about key State Department of Education policy documents and policies which define expectations for student performance:

- *Connecticut's Common Core of Learning (CCL)*, which clearly established high expectations for the learning of all of Connecticut's children;
- *The Connecticut Framework: K – 12 Curricular Goals and Standards*, which established student content and performance standards across all disciplines by grade span (e.g., kindergarten through Grade 4, Grades 4 through 8, Grades 9 through 12); and

- Connecticut Mastery Test (CMT) and Connecticut Academic Performance Test (CAPT), which provide indices of actual student performance.

The following publications may be accessed on the CSDE website: <http://www.ct.gov/sde> :

Click on “*Curriculum*” for *The Connecticut Framework: K – 12 Curricular Goals and Standards and the Common Core of Learning (CCL)*.

Click on “*Student Testing*” for the *Connecticut Mastery Test and Connecticut Academic Performance Test (CAPT)*.

CHAPTER 1: REQUIREMENTS OF THE BEST PROGRAM

This chapter will assist beginning teachers in understanding:

- BEST Program requirements, including the specific requirements for teachers based on their teaching assignment and certification endorsement area;
- timelines for completing the BEST Program;
- whom to contact for assistance;
- responsibilities and rights of beginning teachers; and
- special requirements for graduates of the Alternate Route to Certification (ARC) Program.

The sections in this chapter include:

Section A: Who must participate in the BEST Program?

Section B: Timelines for BEST

Section C: BEST Program Requirements

Section D: Program Requirements for Holders of Durational Shortage Area Permits (DSAPs)

Section E: Annual Registration in BEST

Section F: Online Resources in BEST

Section G: BEST Program Contacts/Resources

Section H: The Rights and Responsibilities of Beginning Teachers in the BEST Program

Section I: Special Requirements for Graduates of the Alternate Route to Certification (ARC) Program

Section A: Who Must Participate in the BEST Program?

Beginning teachers who:

- are employed as teachers in a Connecticut public school¹ or an approved private special education facility;
- **hold one** of the following certificates:•
 1. initial educator certificate
 2. interim initial educator certificate
 3. temporary 90-day certificate
 4. *durational shortage area permit (DSAPs)²

*Please refer to page 7 for participation information for holders of **DSAPs**;

- are employed full-time or part-time; and
- are hired under a *long-term substitute status* (provided they are teaching under a **valid certificate** as noted above and in the corresponding endorsement area of that certificate).

NOTE: Holding a **valid certificate** is a condition for both employment as a teacher **and** participation in the BEST Program. Beginning teachers must hold a teaching certificate with an endorsement that is appropriate to their teaching assignment. A teacher's BEST Participation Category is determined by the teacher's certification and teaching assignment.

Where do I go for help?

If you are not holding a teaching certificate (or you are not holding a teaching certificate appropriate to your teaching assignment) or your certificate has lapsed, please contact the Certification Office immediately at (860) 713-6969, or contact via e-mail at teacher.cert@ct.gov.

¹ Public schools include charter schools, magnet schools, regional educational service centers, private special education facilities and schools operated by the Department of Correction, Department of Mental Retardation and Department of Children and Families.

² Teachers serving under DSAPs are registered into BEST for the purpose of receiving support until they meet eligibility requirements for the initial educator or 90-day certificate.

Section B: Timelines for BEST

BEST is a **two-year program**, with a **third year available** if a teacher has not met the BEST portfolio performance standard in year two. Individuals who fail to successfully complete the BEST Program portfolio assessment by the end of their third year of teaching **will not be eligible** for re-issuance of the initial educator certificate.

Where do I go for help?

If you are uncertain about your status in the BEST Program, you should contact your BEST Program District Facilitator. The *BEST Program District Facilitator* is the teacher or administrator in the local district appointed by the superintendent to coordinate the implementation of the BEST Program in the local school district. A directory of BEST District Facilitators can be found in **Appendix 1**.

Section C: BEST Program Requirements

“BEST Participation Categories” as of the 2006-07 School Year (see Figure 1, page 8)

There are **two categories of participation** in the BEST Program effective for beginning teachers first registered in the BEST Program as of the **2006-07** school year. To verify participation categories based on certification, please refer to **Appendix 2**.

(1) PORTFOLIO INDUCTION PROGRAM: a two-year induction program of support and portfolio assessment (with a third year available, if needed) for teachers certified in elementary education, English language arts, mathematics, music, physical education, science, social studies, special education, visual arts, world languages and bilingual education.

Beginning teachers in this category receive support from a mentor or support team in their first year of teaching and must complete a BEST portfolio in their second year of teaching (standards for the evaluation of the BEST portfolio assessment are summarized in Figure 3, page 32).

NOTE: for middle grades certified teachers: Middle grades certified teachers participate in the portfolio assessment corresponding to their primary teaching assignment (English language arts, mathematics, science, or social studies). *[Please refer to page 22 for more details on middle grades participation.]*

NOTE: for bilingual education certified teachers: Bilingual education certified teachers participate in the portfolio assessment corresponding to their primary teaching assignment (e.g., elementary, mathematics, science, etc.). Bilingual educators who have any questions regarding their participation area and requirements should contact their BEST District Facilitator.

All Portfolio Induction Participants should read **all** three chapters of this guide carefully.

- (2) **SUPPORT ONLY INDUCTION PROGRAM:** a one-year program of support only for teachers of agriculture and vocational agriculture, business education, health, home economics, technology education, partially sighted, hearing impaired, blind, marketing education, occupational and trades-related subjects in Connecticut Technical High Schools or in a comprehensive high school and TESOL.

Beginning teachers in this category receive support from a mentor or support team during their first year of teaching.

Support Only Induction Participants: Please read Chapters 1 and 2 of this Guide.

Section D: Program Requirements for Holders of Durational Shortage Area Permits (DSAPs)

Individuals who are teaching under a DSAP are registered into BEST for the purpose of receiving support until they complete all coursework and testing requirements for the initial educator certificate or temporary 90-day certificate. Subsequently, if teaching under an initial certificate or 90-day certificate in a subject area for which a portfolio assessment is applicable, the teacher must complete requirements as a participant in the *Portfolio Induction Category*; or if teaching under the initial certificate in a *Support Only Category* subject area, must maintain registration in BEST in order to complete an additional year of support under the *Support Only Category*. Note that individuals who are teaching under a DSAP must receive at least two years of support through mentorship. Please refer to BEST Participation Categories in Figure 1, page 8.

FIGURE 1

BEST Participation Categories 2006-07

I. PORTFOLIO INDUCTION PROGRAM

BEST Program requirements for teachers of bilingual education, elementary education, English language arts, mathematics, music, physical education, science, social studies, special education, visual arts and world languages

YEAR ONE	YEAR TWO	YEAR THREE (if needed)
<p align="center">School-based support: (required)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • orientation sessions • support by mentor or support team <p align="center">State-based support: (recommended)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • regionally scheduled discipline-specific seminars in the spring • Internet-accessible online learning units 	<p align="center">School-based support: (optional at discretion of district)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • support by mentor or support team <p align="center">State-based support: (recommended)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • regionally scheduled discipline-specific seminars (two for each content area) in the fall • Internet-accessible online learning units <p align="center">Assessment (required):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • submission of a teaching portfolio by May 15, 2007 	<p align="center">School-based support: (optional at discretion of district)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • support by mentor or support team <p align="center">State-based support: (recommended)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • portfolio conferences for beginning teachers not meeting the portfolio standard in year two <p align="center">Assessment: (required)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • submission of a teaching portfolio by Feb. 1, 2007* <p><i>*Third portfolio submission: Upon request of the superintendent of schools, year-three participants who have already submitted two portfolios and have not met standards <i>may</i> have one additional submission opportunity by June 15. This option is not available to individuals who have submitted fewer than two portfolios.</i></p>

NOTE: additional program requirements for graduates of the Alternate Route to Certification (ARC) Program are shown on page 13.

II. SUPPORT ONLY INDUCTION PROGRAM

BEST Program requirements for teachers of agriculture and vocational agriculture, business education, health, home economics, technology education, partially sighted, hearing impaired, blind, marketing education, occupational and trades-related subjects in Connecticut Technical High Schools or in a comprehensive high school and TESOL.

Year One
<p align="center">School-based support (required):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support by mentor or support team <p align="center">State-based support (recommended):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • BEST Orientation Sessions

Section E: Annual Registration in BEST

It is the responsibility of the school district to enter beginning teachers in the State Staff File each year within **10 days** of hire or assignment to a school district. Teachers who hold the appropriate certificates (as listed on page 5) are automatically registered into the BEST Program. Registration occurs on an annual basis, until beginning teachers have met all BEST Program requirements.

Beginning teachers receive a **registration confirmation letter** from the Connecticut State Department of Education, confirming that they have been registered or re-registered in the program. This letter contains the following critical information, based upon the data provided by the school district in the State Staff File:

Name

Social Security Number

District

School

Date of registration in BEST

Primary certification endorsement area

Primary teaching assignment

Mentor or support team leader

Portfolio subject area, if applicable

This information must be accurate and updated as appropriate, as it affects the category of BEST Program participation to which beginning teachers are assigned, the address to which materials and information will be sent and communications to the school district about the status of beginning teachers in the BEST Program.

Where do I go for help?

If you do not receive a registration confirmation letter from CSDE, you should contact your BEST District Facilitator to ensure that you have been entered into the State Staff File. **Registration confirmation letters will be sent to you at your school address and should be received by the end of October if you were entered in September. If you were entered after September, you should receive confirmation within one month after your entry date. PLEASE READ YOUR LETTER CAREFULLY SO THAT YOU ARE AWARE OF YOUR STATUS IN THE PROGRAM AND YOUR REQUIREMENTS.**

If the information on the registration confirmation letter is incorrect, you must complete the “BEST Data Change Form” (enclosed with your registration confirmation letter) and submit it to your District Facilitator immediately. Should changes in teaching assignment, school assignment or employing district occur at a later date, **please remember to inform the BEST Program Office at (860) 713-6820.**

Section F: Online (web-based) Resources in BEST through “BEST CONNECTIONS”

The **BEST Connections** website address is www.ctbest.org. This website has been established for multiple purposes: (1) as a communications site; (2) as a registration site; and (3) as a link to BEST resource documents.

- **For BEST communications:** To help ensure that you receive prompt and timely communications from BEST portfolio project leaders and teachers-in-residence, go to www.ctbest.org and click on “communications” to subscribe to content-specific BEST messages. Through this e-mail connection, we will be able to stay in touch with you regarding:
 - important dates and/or reminders;
 - professional development training opportunities relevant to your teaching area; and
 - resources and tips to help you complete your portfolio and improve your instruction.
- **To register for all BEST professional development courses:** Check the BEST Connections website for listings of BEST Regional Seminars and Orientation Sessions. (See page 18 for State Support Related to General and Portfolio Requirements for a description of types of offerings.)
- **BEST resource documents:** By clicking on “Resources” you can access the following informational materials: *A Guide to the BEST Program for Beginning Teachers*, portfolio handbooks in 10 subject areas, portfolio-related forms, learning units in 10 subject areas, portfolio feedback rubrics, sample portfolio performance reports in 10 content areas and the *Common Core of Teaching*. (See page 19 for more information on online learning units.)

Section G: BEST Program Contacts/Resources

Connecticut State Department of Education (CSDE):

Bureau of Educator Preparation, Certification, Support and Assessment

- **BEST Program Office:** Individuals may contact the BEST Program Office at (860) 713-6820 with questions regarding program participation status, requirements of the program or support issues, or to report changes in employment/school address.
- The BEST Program staff also includes a **project leader and/or one or more teachers-in-residence** representing each subject area included in the Portfolio Induction Program: elementary, English language arts, mathematics, music, physical education, science, social studies, special education, visual arts and world languages. These individuals are readily available to assist and advise beginning teachers in program participation related to the Portfolio Induction model. A list of project leaders and teachers-in-residence can be found in **Appendix 3**.

- Call the Certification Office for questions about certification and application processes at (860) 713-6969, or contact them via e-mail at teacher.cert@ct.gov.

Regional Educational Service Centers (RESCs):

- **EASTCONN** Regional Educational Service Center (RESC) serves as CSDE's central administrator of the BEST Program. Many BEST Program services and correspondences are handled by EASTCONN. EASTCONN can be reached at its toll-free help line at (888) 531-9910. An EASTCONN representative will be able to answer questions or direct individuals to an appropriate resource.
- **ACES, CES, CREC, Education Connection and LEARN:** These are the five additional RESCs. Each has representatives on staff who serve as BEST Program liaisons to mentors, portfolio scorers and district facilitators. The RESCs also provide the following services to beginning teachers: regional BEST orientations and portfolio seminars. In addition, RESCs host Portfolio Assessment Conferences (PACs). A list of the RESCs can be found in **Appendix 4** and a map of RESCs can be found in **Appendix 9**.

Section H: The Rights and Responsibilities of Beginning Teachers in the BEST Program

The successful induction of new teachers into the profession as well as meeting requirements for ongoing teacher certification requires a sharing of responsibilities among the local school district, state and the beginning teacher.

The Rights of Beginning Teachers:

- **School-based support:** assignment of a mentor or support team within 10 days of commencing teaching; provision of instructional support specific to one's content area or discipline.
- **State-based support:** provision of professional development through discipline-specific seminars and internet-accessible online learning units/seminars and ongoing communications through the BEST Connections website; conferences for individuals who do not successfully complete the portfolio assessment.
- **Regular contacts with a mentor or support team member:** at least biweekly meetings or other forms of contact with the mentor or a support team member (see page 15).
- **Availability of release time:** local district provision of release time on at least eight occasions (or equivalent of eight and a half days) to allow beginning teachers to observe or be observed by their mentors or support team members or for professional development-related activities.
- **Application for an exemption from the BEST assessment:** If a beginning teacher's teaching assignment is so unique that the requirements of the BEST portfolio assessment cannot be met, the beginning teacher, in conjunction with the BEST District Facilitator,

may apply for an exemption. (See page 29 for a more detailed explanation of BEST Program assessment exemption policies and procedures for the portfolio program.)

Where do I go for help?

Your first point of contact for problems or issues with the BEST Program is the District Facilitator. You should contact that individual if you have not been assigned a mentor or support team within 10 days of commencing teaching, or if you are not receiving the assistance you need from your mentor or support team. Your principal is also responsible for ensuring that you are provided with appropriate instructional support by your mentor or support team and for facilitating opportunities for mentors and support team members to meet on a regular basis.

If, after contacting both your District Facilitator and principal, you are still not receiving the support you need to successfully complete the BEST Program, you should contact EASTCONN at 888-531-9910. EASTCONN will refer you to alternative forms of regionally based support, depending upon what your specific needs are. In addition, BEST Program teachers-in-residence can also be of assistance in referring you to content-specific sources of support both in- and outside your district.

The Responsibilities of Beginning Teachers:

- Beginning teachers must maintain a **valid Connecticut teaching certificate** and must not let it lapse. **Both employment and BEST participation are dependent upon Beginning Teachers holding a valid certificate.**
- Beginning teachers must know their **program status** and what they must do to **successfully complete** the BEST Program within the appropriate time frame, as well as the consequences of nonparticipation.
- Beginning teachers should know who their **District Facilitator** is. The BEST Program District Facilitator is responsible for coordinating the implementation of the BEST Program within each school district. A directory of BEST District Facilitators can be found in **Appendix 1.**
- **Beginning teachers must verify, on an annual basis, that the information shown in BEST registration confirmation letters is correct and agrees with the district's understanding of their participation status. If not, Beginning Teachers must contact the BEST Program office at (860) 713-6820 to resolve any discrepancies.**
- Once registered in BEST, beginning teachers must **inform the BEST Program office at (860) 713-6820 of any changes** in teaching assignment, school assignment, name or employing school district.

- Beginning teachers should use the **resources available in their district** such as their mentor or support team, principal, department chair or supervisor, colleagues trained as BEST assessors and other beginning teachers who have recently completed the BEST Program.
- Beginning teachers should use **resources provided by CSDE** such as discipline-specific support online and regional seminars to strengthen their knowledge of instructional strategies and students as learners as well as to prepare for the BEST requirements.

Section I: Special Requirements for Graduates of the Alternate Route to Certification (ARC) Program

ARC beginning teachers must meet the following ***additional*** requirements in order to be eligible for the provisional educator certificate:

- 1) **School-based support:** ARC beginning teachers are provided with a school-based mentor or support team for a **two-year period**.
- 2) **Thirty hours of professional development:** ARC beginning teachers must complete a minimum of 30 hours of professional development prior to application for the provisional educator certificate. Beginning teachers must submit an attestation to the Bureau of Educator Preparation, Certification, Support and Assessment by the superintendent of schools verifying completion of the 30 hours of professional development through attendance at a combination of CSDE-sponsored seminars/workshops **and** professional development sponsored or approved through the teacher's district.

Examples of BEST professional development are discipline-specific support seminars held at regional sites and BEST orientation sessions. At the conclusion of each school year, CEU certificates will be sent to ARC beginning teachers verifying their attendance at BEST professional development sessions.

CHAPTER 2: SUPPORT FOR BEGINNING TEACHERS

This chapter describes the support component of the BEST Program by outlining its goals and the kinds of school- and state-based support available to beginning teachers. The sections in this chapter include:

Section A: The Goal of BEST Program Support

Section B: School-Based Support for Beginning Teachers

1. What is the role of the mentor or BEST support team?
2. Responsibilities of the individual mentor or support team
3. Examples of instructional support provided by the mentor or support team

Section C: State-Based Support for Beginning Teachers

1. State support related to general BEST requirements
2. State support related to the BEST teaching portfolio

Section A: The Goal of BEST Program Support

The mission of the BEST Program is to ensure that every Connecticut student is taught by a highly qualified and competent teacher. Accordingly, BEST Program support is designed to:

- ensure that beginning teachers have opportunities to strengthen their knowledge of subject matter and instructional strategies as well as to enhance their understanding of students as learners;
- prepare beginning teachers to successfully develop and demonstrate the foundational skills and competencies as well as discipline-specific teaching standards as defined by *Connecticut's Common Core of Teaching*;
- assist beginning teachers in understanding the school and district's curricular goals and standards, as well as state standards for student achievement, as defined by *Connecticut's Common Core of Learning*, *Connecticut Framework: K-12 Curricular Goals and Standards* and Connecticut Mastery Test (CMT) and Connecticut Academic Performance Test (CAPT); and
- provide the foundation for a process of lifelong learning and professional growth.

Ultimately, the goal of BEST Program support is to help beginning teachers improve the effectiveness of their instruction, thereby leading to improved student learning.

The Integration of the BEST Induction Program with Local District Induction Processes

Many school districts have developed their own processes for inducting beginning teachers into the school or district, such as holding regularly scheduled meetings with beginning teachers, hosting monthly breakfasts with the principal and new staff members, orienting beginning teachers to the community, or inviting beginning teachers to observe curriculum committee or other staff meetings. The district induction process may involve many different individuals, such as the principals, department chairs, middle school team leaders, the district's staff development director or professional development coordinator, or other staff members.

Many districts have developed a written document regarding district support. It is called a Support Action Plan. The Support Action Plan describes the district's program and policies for inducting new teachers and meeting BEST Program requirements. This document is intended to provide notification of all support initiatives to both the providers and receivers of support. Beginning teachers may ask their district facilitator if such a plan exists for their district and, if so, may request a copy.

BEST Program Support

BEST Program Support is designed to complement the local district's induction process and ensure that beginning teachers have minimum levels of school-based support provided by a trained mentor or support team assigned to them during their first year.

There are two types of support provided in the BEST Program:

1. school-based support; and
2. state-based support.

Section B: School-Based Support for Beginning Teachers

This section will focus on school-based support, which is provided by either an individual mentor or a "support team."

Minimum Levels of School-Based Support Required Through the BEST Program

- A. Assignment of a **mentor** or **support team** within 10 days of commencing teaching.
- B. **Regular contacts** with the mentor or support team members:
 1. Local district provision of release time **on at least eight occasions** (or equivalence to eight and a half days) for beginning teachers to observe or be observed by their mentors or support team members or for professional development-related activities.
 2. The equivalent of 30 hours of "**significant contacts**" over the course of a school year between a beginning teacher and his or her mentor, support team members, content colleagues, the principal and/or district facilitator.

These "*significant contacts*" may include district-wide BEST orientation meetings, after-school professional development activities provided by district facilitators, regular meetings such as breakfasts for beginning teachers with the principal, activities introducing beginning teachers to the community and regularly scheduled staff meetings in which beginning teachers participate.

1. What is the Role of the Mentor or BEST Support Team?

A **mentor** is an accomplished teacher who has been selected by the local school district and has completed BEST Program Support Teacher training. This individual is assigned to support a beginning teacher during his or her first year of participation in the BEST Program. The individual mentor is trained to provide instructional support to the beginning teacher as well as to identify additional resources needed to ensure that the beginning teacher develops competency in his or her teaching.

A **BEST support team** is a group of educators led by a school staff member who has completed BEST Support Teacher training. A support team may support one or more beginning teachers at the district or building level. Other members of the team may include teachers in the same content area or grade level as the beginning teacher, a trained Connecticut Competency Instrument (CCI) assessor or BEST portfolio scorer, the principal, a department chair, a curriculum specialist and past “graduates” of the BEST Program.

A **master or lead mentor** is someone assigned to a school building to act as a liaison to the district facilitator, mentors and beginning teachers for the purpose of brokering support and resources as needed.

2. Responsibilities of the Individual Mentor or Support Team

Regardless of whether support is provided by a mentor or a support team, that mentor or support team is responsible for assisting the beginning teacher in:

- exploring a variety of teaching strategies that address diversity in students and their learning styles;
- identifying the effective teaching strategies that conform to the foundational skills and competencies as well as discipline-specific standards of the CCT;
- reflecting on the effectiveness of teaching and how well students are learning; and
- documenting the types and frequency of support provided to the beginning teacher.

3. Examples of Instructional Support Provided by the Mentor or Support Team

a. Gaining practice in how to document one’s teaching and reflect on practice

Beginning teachers who are participating in the Portfolio Induction category are required to document **5-8 hours of instruction** with one class through submission of a BEST teaching portfolio during year two. In addition, many districts are adopting their own versions of portfolios for purposes of documenting teaching as part of the local district evaluation process.

Mentor and support teams can help beginning teachers develop the skills in **collecting evidence** of their teaching and student learning. Examples of documentation that can be collected include the following:

- lesson plans or plans for a unit of instruction;

- lesson logs, including reflections on what went well with the lesson and what could be done differently to elicit more positive results;
- videotapes of lessons or lesson segments; and
- examples of student work and analysis of student progress toward learning goals.

b. Assistance in demonstrating those essential teaching competencies as defined by *Connecticut's Common Core of Teaching*

Connecticut's Common Core of Teaching (CCT) consists of both foundational skills and competencies and discipline-specific teaching standards. Mentors and support team members should assist beginning teachers in mastering the teaching competencies as specified by the CCT. These competencies place an emphasis on teacher content knowledge and the teaching of a specific discipline and the impact of teaching on student learning. This requires beginning teachers and their mentors/support team members to focus on teaching over time (such as a unit of instruction) and to examine multiple sources of data about teaching, including lesson plans, student work, use of assessments and teacher reflection about teaching and learning.

c. Assistance in planning lessons and units of instruction

Mentors/support team members are trained to guide beginning teachers in developing instructional objectives that are clearly stated and appropriate. Writing clear objectives that are observable within the context of the lesson is critical.

Mentors/support team members can also help focus planning of a unit of instruction around the following critical questions:

- How does the beginning teacher use his or her understanding of students to establish learning goals and objectives?
- Are planned tasks related to instructional goals and objectives?
- What materials will be needed for the lesson or unit?
- How does the teacher make accommodations to meet students' needs and interests?
- What assessment strategies does the teacher plan to use and are they appropriate to the goals and objectives?
- What did the teacher learn about the students' knowledge and skills from the work they produced?
- What did the teacher learn about his or her teaching and what accommodations would he or she make the next time this unit is taught?

d. Providing feedback on instruction

Mentors/support team members may either observe a beginning teacher or view a videotape of teaching to provide feedback about the following critical questions:

- How well were the lesson elements tied together so that students could see a connection between lesson elements, as well as past and future learning?
- How well were lessons developed to move students toward achieving objectives?

- What were the teacher's and the students' roles in classroom discourse?
- How effectively did the teacher monitor understanding and make adjustments as appropriate?

e. Learning how to evaluate student work

Mentors/support team members can help beginning teachers select appropriate samples of student work that illustrate learning over time and direct attention to the following critical questions:

- How does the teacher evaluate student work and communicate criteria for success and/or results to students?
- How effective were the assessment strategies the teacher used to gather information about students and their learning?
- How did the teacher use student assessment results to modify instruction?

Where do I go for help?

If you have not been assigned to a mentor or support team and/or have not been meeting regularly with your mentor or support team members, or are concerned that you are not receiving appropriate support as described in this chapter, contact your BEST District Facilitator or principal.

If after contacting both your District Facilitator and principal you are still not receiving the support you need to successfully complete the BEST Program, you should contact EASTCONN at 888-531-9910. EASTCONN will refer you to alternative forms of regionally based support, depending upon what your specific needs are. In addition, BEST Program teachers-in-residence can also be of assistance in referring you to content-specific sources of support both in and outside your district.

Section C. State-Based Support for Beginning Teachers

The state provides support to beginning teachers primarily through the provision of regional and online (web-based) seminars. Beginning teachers are strongly encouraged to attend CSDE-provided professional development offerings and to view the Internet-accessible online learning units/seminars, as they provide valuable information to help beginning teachers successfully complete the BEST Program. Regionally scheduled sessions also help ARC teachers meet the requirement of completing 30 hours of professional development. State support is also provided through the BEST Connections website and program staff (see page 10).

1. State Support Related to General BEST Requirements

- a. **BEST Orientation Sessions for first-year teachers** are offered in the fall to assist first-year beginning teachers in understanding the requirements of the BEST Program. These sessions are optional and are offered for beginning teachers who did not attend a local district orientation or for those who wish to receive additional clarification of BEST requirements.

2. State Support Related to the BEST Teaching Portfolio

- a. **Discipline-specific beginning teacher learning units and seminars:** A series of seminars is offered throughout the first and second year of a beginning teacher's participation in the BEST Program through a combination of *online* (web-based) learning units and *regionally scheduled* seminars.

- **ON-LINE LEARNING UNITS:** All online learning units are designed specifically to support beginning teachers by encouraging collaboration between beginning teachers and their mentors, content colleagues and/or administrators, on topics related to effective planning, instruction and assessment. Each session highlights key elements of the BEST Program requirements and can be accessed by beginning teachers whenever they wish. To access these, go to the BEST website at www.ctbest.org click on "*Online Learning Units.*" Then click on the subject area corresponding your teaching assignment and subject area.

Each online, web-based learning unit includes five sections, as follows:

1. **Lessons** provide a review of one or more components of effective teaching in the beginning teacher's discipline or content area.
 2. **Exercises** are activities designed to assist beginning teachers in focusing on important elements of effective teaching in their discipline. Most exercises are designed to facilitate focused interactions and collaborative work between beginning teachers and their mentors or other colleagues.
 3. **The Mentor Corner** includes key issues or questions that can focus discussions between a beginning teacher and his or her mentor or content colleague on effective teaching.
 4. **The Portfolio Corner** identifies the direct link between the content of each learning unit with the portfolio requirement.
 5. **Resources** include discipline-specific standards, actual portfolio samples, related recommended websites and more. In some cases, beginning teachers will need to refer to resources in order to complete the learning unit exercises.
- **REGIONAL SEMINARS:** Beginning teachers are invited to attend one regional seminar (scheduled at regional sites around the state) in the spring of their first year in BEST and two in the fall of their second year in BEST. These seminars complement the online learning units and provide an opportunity for beginning teachers to deepen their understanding of Connecticut's teaching standards and portfolio requirements through participation in structured collaborations with

peers and seminar leaders. **For scheduled dates and site information and to register, go to www.ctbest.org and click on “Registration” and then “Beginning Teacher Seminars.”**

- b. Portfolio Assessment Conferences:** Beginning teachers who do not meet the acceptable performance standard on the portfolio during their second year of teaching are eligible for in-person conferences with a trained portfolio scorer. These trained professionals will assist beginning teachers in understanding their performance in the portfolio assessment and preparing for submission of a new portfolio during year three.

Where can I go for help?

Information and registration instructions on all BEST Professional Development Sessions will be made available to you through one or all of the following sources:

1. direct mail to you at your school address;
2. the “BEST Connections” website: www.ctbest.org;
3. the CSDE website: www.ct.gov/sde – click on “BEST;”
4. your BEST District Facilitator; and
5. EASTCONN at (888) 531-9910.

CHAPTER 3: THE BEST PROGRAM PORTFOLIO ASSESSMENT

Beginning teachers first registered in the BEST Program during the 2006-2007 school year **who are teaching and are certified in the areas of** bilingual education, elementary education, English language arts, mathematics, middle grades, physical education, science, social studies, special education, visual arts and world languages **must successfully complete the portfolio assessment as a participation requirement in the BEST Program.**

This chapter describes the BEST Program portfolio assessment process. Successful completion of this process is required for beginning teachers who are participating in the **Portfolio Induction Program.**

The sections in this chapter include:

- Section A: Special Notice Regarding Participation of Elementary/Middle Grades Certified Teachers**
- Section B: The BEST Program Portfolio Assessment**
- Section C: Scoring of the Portfolio Assessment**
- Section D: Portfolio Performance Standards and Score Descriptions**
- Section E: Portfolio Completion Standard**
- Section F: Code of Professional Responsibility**
- Section G: Important Notice about Third-Year Participation**
- Section H: Submission of Portfolio in Year One**
- Section I: Change in Teaching Assignment from Year One to Year Two**
- Section J: Documentation of Special Circumstances**
- Section K: Exemption Policy for the BEST Portfolio Assessment**
- Section L: Science Safety Self-Assessment (Science Teachers Only)**

Section A: Special Notice Regarding Participation of Elementary and Middle Grades Certified Teachers

1. *Elementary certified teachers:*

- Beginning teachers who ***teach multiple subjects in a self-contained classroom*** should participate in the elementary component of the Portfolio Induction Program.
- ***Elementary certified teachers*** whose teaching assignment is English language arts only (including integrated language arts or developmental reading) or mathematics only (including remedial mathematics) may petition through the portfolio exemption process to complete ***only the literacy*** or ***only the numeracy*** portion of the elementary portfolio. ***NOTE: a petition for exemption from either the literacy or numeracy portion of the portfolio will not be considered until year two of participation in BEST.*** (See page 29 for more information on the exemption process.)
- ***Elementary certified teachers*** who teach social studies only or science only, or a combination of both, are required to complete a social studies *or* science portfolio.

2. *Middle school certified teachers:*

- Middle school certified teachers who teach primarily one subject area (such as English/language arts, history/social studies, mathematics or science) should participate in the component of the Portfolio Induction Program that corresponds to their primary teaching assignment by submitting a portfolio in that content area. If a middle grades teacher is assigned to teach more than one subject area, he or she should select the BEST participation area that corresponds to his or her primary teaching assignment (representing his or her greater course load).

Section B: The BEST Program Portfolio Assessment

The BEST Program teacher portfolio assessments have been designed to assess the foundational skills and competencies as well as discipline-specific teaching standards identified in *Connecticut's Common Core of Teaching* (see **Appendix 10**).

All portfolios, regardless of the content area, require the following documentation:

- daily lesson plans for a five to eight hour unit of instruction with one class;
- two or three videotaped segments of teaching equaling in total approximately 30-40 minutes;
- examples of the work of two students; and
- reflective commentaries on teaching and learning that took place during the unit.

In summary, the teacher generally writes about **12–16** pages of commentaries and completes **five to eight** lesson logs, depending upon the length of the unit. The remainder of the portfolio consists of copies of instructional materials and examples of student work and the videotape.

Portfolio handbooks in each disciplinary area provide information about the specific requirements of the portfolio. Portfolio handbooks will be made available on a CD-ROM and distributed by mail to school addresses of all first- and second-year teachers. In addition, portfolio handbooks are available through the ***BEST Connections website*** at www.ctbest.org; **click on “Resources” and then “Handbooks.”** Annually, a committee of beginning and experienced teachers is convened to review the portfolio handbooks to ensure clarity of tasks and questions, review page limits and ensure that there is no redundancy of information requested in the portfolio.

Feedback on your portfolio: All beginning teachers receive an **individualized performance summary**, which describes their performance in the categories of designing and implementing instruction, assessment of learning and analysis of teaching. All beginning teachers who do not successfully complete the portfolio assessment are encouraged to schedule a **BEST Portfolio Assessment Conference (PAC)**. During such conferences, a trained portfolio scorer/trainer meets individually with a beginning teacher to help him or her interpret the score report and discuss strategies for improvement.

A **Sample Portfolio Framework**, which illustrates the common elements of BEST teaching portfolios across content areas, is included at the end of this chapter: **Figure 2**, page 31.

Where can I go for help?

- **BEST Connections, which provides BEST information, communications and registration at website www.ctbest.org**, has been set up to ensure that all BEST Program participants receive ongoing communications from BEST Program staff members, portfolio project leaders and teachers-in-residence. To receive ongoing communications through your e-mail, go to www.ctbest.org and click on “Communications.”
- **General information** about the BEST Program and the portfolio assessment can be found on the *BEST Connections* website at www.ctbest.org; click on “Resources.” These resources include *A Guide to the BEST Program for Beginning Teachers*, *Portfolio Handbooks in 10 subject areas*, *all portfolio-related forms*, *Portfolio Feedback Rubrics*, *learning units in 10 subject areas* and *the Common Core of Teaching*.
- **BEST Connections** is also a registration site for all BEST Professional Development seminars for beginning teachers. To view all professional development offerings for beginning teachers, go to www.ctbest.org and click on “Registration.”
- **BEST Portfolio exemplars** are made available at each RESC for viewing by beginning teachers and their mentors. These examples represent a selection of beginning teacher portfolios in each content area. To view these exemplars, call your nearest RESC to schedule an appointment (see **Appendix 4** for a list of the RESCs). Some districts have purchased copies of portfolio exemplars (check with your district facilitator). In addition, the online discipline-specific seminars contain a sample portfolio for each of the respective disciplines (see website address above).
- **Support of Colleagues:** In addition to your mentor, seek out others who have completed BEST portfolios and those who are trained portfolio scorers.

Section C: Scoring of the Portfolio Assessment

The BEST teaching portfolios submitted during a beginning teacher's second year of participation in BEST are scored during the following summer. Portfolios are evaluated by experienced educators with extensive teaching experience in the same disciplinary area as the beginning teacher. Each assessor has participated in at least 50 hours of comprehensive training in the scoring of teaching portfolios and has demonstrated reliability in scoring. Any portfolio that does not meet the acceptable performance standard is rescored independently by additional portfolio scorers to confirm the rating.

The portfolio evaluation process, which takes approximately 4-5 hours per portfolio, consists of four steps:

Collecting and recording evidence through note taking: Assessors carefully review all components of the portfolio and take detailed notes.

Interpreting the evidence: Evidence is then organized around a series of **guiding questions and performance indicators**, which are derived from the discipline-specific professional teaching standards. The portfolio handbooks include a list of these guiding questions so that beginning teachers are fully aware of the criteria by which their portfolios will be evaluated.

Evaluating the quality of the teaching documented in the portfolio: Assessors then identify patterns of evidence that lead to a final overall score.

Providing data for the portfolio score report: Each beginning teacher receives an individual portfolio performance profile and feedback rubric, which summarizes a beginning teacher's performance on the portfolio. This report is sent to beginning teachers in early September. To view a sample score report, go to www.ctbest.org, click on "Resources" and then "Documents" and scroll down to "*BEST Portfolio Performance Feedback Rubrics and Sample Score Reports.*"

Section D: Portfolio Performance Standards and Performance Level
Descriptions for Teachers of Elementary, English Language Arts,
Mathematics, Music, Physical Education, Science, Social Studies,
Special Education, Visual Arts and World Languages³

On June 2, 2000, the State Board of Education established standards for the evaluation of BEST teaching portfolios. **Figure 3** on page 32 shows that the standards are based upon the foundational skills and competencies of the CCT related to teacher knowledge, planning, instruction and assessment as well as the discipline-based professional teaching standards.

The following performance standards have been established for teachers certified to teach elementary education, English language arts, mathematics, music, physical education, science, social studies, special education, visual arts and world languages:⁴

PERFORMANCE STANDARD	PERFORMANCE LEVEL DESCRIPTIONS	CONSEQUENCE
ACCEPTABLE	4 - <u>Advanced</u> performance in meeting the standards.	Eligibility for the provisional educator certificate provided all other certification requirements are met.
	3 - <u>Proficient</u> performance in meeting the standards.	
	2 - <u>Competent</u> performance in meeting the standards.	
NOT ACCEPTABLE	1 - <u>Conditional</u> performance in meeting the standards.	If in Year 2: Eligibility for a third year in the BEST Program and submission of up to two additional teaching portfolios. If by the end of Year 3: Ineligibility for continued certification. (<i>Eligibility for reissuance only after a period of Intervening Study and Experience as approved by CSDE.</i>)
	Not Scorable* - incomplete or inadequate portfolio documentation that interferes with the accurate or fair scoring of the portfolio.	If in Year 2: Eligibility for a third year in the BEST Program and submission of up to two additional teaching portfolios. If by the end of Year 3: Ineligibility for continued certification. (<i>Eligibility for reissuance only after a period of Intervening Study and Experience as approved by CSDE.</i>)
	0 - Evidence of conduct in violation of the Code of Professional Responsibility for Teachers (Section 145d-400a of the Certification Regulations).	If in Year 2: Eligibility for a third year in the BEST Program only if requested in writing by the superintendent of schools and upon a finding of good cause by the Commissioner of Education. If by the end of Year 3: Ineligibility for continued certification.

*For elaboration, see Section IV, "Invalidation of Portfolio Submissions."

³ See page 27 for those cohorts that are eligible for the portfolio completion standard for 2006-2007.

⁴ CSDE reserves the right to implement the *Completion* standard instead of the *Performance* standard for certain categories of beginning teachers.

Section E: Portfolio Completion Standard for all teachers serving under a bilingual certificate, as well as teachers of English language arts, mathematics, science or social studies teaching under the middle Grades 4-8 (006) generic certification or teachers of science and social studies teaching under an elementary certificate

In certain situations, beginning teachers are required to meet the portfolio “completion standard” instead of the “performance standard” previously described. Examples of these situations include the pilot testing of a portfolio that has not yet been validated for teachers in a particular teaching setting, or when performance standards have not yet been finalized. For the 2006-07 school year, the completion standard will be applied to those who are serving under ***bilingual*** certification. In addition, the completion standard is applicable to beginning teachers who submit portfolios in English language arts, mathematics, science or social studies while teaching under the middle Grades 4–8 (006) generic certification and teachers who submit portfolios in science or social studies while teaching under an elementary certificate.

The completion standard has four components: comprehensiveness, adequacy, timeliness of submission and conduct in accordance with the Code of Professional Responsibility for Professional Educators, all of which must be met.

1. ***Comprehensiveness:*** All components of the teaching portfolio are present: lesson logs, videotape(s), student work, commentaries (as outlined in portfolio handbook guidelines).
2. ***Adequacy:*** The contents of the portfolio reflect that the beginning teacher followed the portfolio handbook directions with regard to the period of time teaching is documented, the type of lesson and duration of lesson segments recorded on videotape, the nature and quantity of student work and the content of the lesson commentaries (i.e., the teacher’s narrative is consistent with the questions asked).
3. ***Timeliness of Submission:*** The portfolio must be received by the specified deadline. Exceptions to this deadline must be requested in writing to the BEST project leader for the specific subject area and will only be granted upon finding of good cause.
4. ***Conduct in Accordance with the Code of Professional Responsibility for Professional Educators:*** The teaching documented in the portfolio reflects professional and ethical conduct.

Consequences for failure to meet completion standard at the end of year two:

The beginning teacher will be required to participate for an additional year in the BEST Program and submit a new portfolio during year three. A copy of the letter informing the beginning teacher that she or he has not met the completion standard will be sent to the BEST Program District Facilitator and the superintendent.

Consequences for failure to meet the completion standard at the end of year three:

The beginning teacher will not have fulfilled the requirements of the BEST Program and will not be eligible for continued teaching certification. In such cases, the candidate will be eligible for re-issuance of the Initial Educator Certificate only after completion of a state-approved, planned program of intervening study and experience during the course of one school year.

Section F: Code of Professional Responsibility

All teachers licensed in the State of Connecticut are held to the Code of Professional Responsibility for Teachers (Sec. 10-145d-400a of the State Certification Regulations). All teaching documented in the portfolio must reflect professional and ethical conduct. **The Teaching Portfolio Authenticity Sign-Off form (see Appendix 5) must be included with all portfolios submitted for evaluation and must be signed by both the beginning teacher and the principal.** Any detection of a breach of ethical conduct such as plagiarism (e.g., the taking of whole parts of portfolio exemplars or someone else's portfolio), lack of authenticity of the student work or video, or forgery (i.e., principal's signature) will be reported to the district's employing superintendent and **may result in revocation of licensure.**

Section G: Important Notice About Third-Year Participation

Beginning teachers who submit a portfolio in year two but do not meet the portfolio standard or beginning teachers who fail to submit a portfolio in year two have the opportunity to submit a portfolio during their third year of participation in the BEST Program. These portfolios are due **February 1**, with the final score report submitted to the beginning teacher and district by **April 1**.

Eligibility for a Third Portfolio Submission: Upon request of the superintendent of schools, third-year BEST program participants who have already submitted two portfolios (one in year two and one in February of year three) and who have not yet met the acceptable performance standard *may* have one additional submission opportunity (by June 15). *This option is not available to individuals who have submitted fewer than two portfolios.*

A beginning teacher who does not submit a portfolio or does not meet the acceptable performance standard **by the end of the third year is not eligible** for re-issuance of the Initial Educator Certificate. In such cases, the candidate will be eligible to **apply for re-issuance** of the Initial Educator Certificate only **after completion** of a **state-approved planned program** of intervening study and experience over the course of one school year.

Section H: Submission of Portfolio in Year One

A beginning teacher may elect to submit a portfolio in the first participation year with the approval of his or her principal and BEST District Facilitator. However, research shows that beginning teachers need to focus on the development of basic teaching competencies and management of the classroom environment in the first year with the greater emphasis on content-specific teaching pedagogy in year two. Therefore, it is strongly recommended that the portfolio assessment be postponed until the second year of teaching. However, should a teacher choose to submit a portfolio in the first year, please refer to *Application to Elect to Submit a Portfolio in Year One* in **Appendix 6**. This option is not available to beginning teachers subject to the portfolio completion standard (i.e., bilingual and others as identified on page 27 for 2006-07).

Section I: Change in Teaching Assignment from Year One to Year Two

A beginning teacher who has a significant change in teaching assignment (*one which impacts the BEST portfolio participation area*) may petition to extend the time frame for completing BEST by “rolling back” his or her *participation year*.

- Examples of changes that *qualify* for this extension are from science in year one to mathematics in year two or from English/language arts in year one to social studies in year two.
- Examples of changes that *do not qualify* for this extension because they do not impact the BEST portfolio participation area are from chemistry in year one to biology in year two, or from history in year one to geography in year two, or from Grade 1 to Grade 5 in elementary.

If approved for the extension, a teacher who is actually in the second year of registration in BEST will be considered “year one” in his or her new portfolio participation area. A request form for this change can be found in **Appendix 7: Documentation of Change in Teaching Assignment and Request for an Adjustment in BEST Program Status**.

Section J: Extension of Time to Complete BEST Based on Documentation of Special Circumstances

Special and extenuating circumstances, such as a break in employment or a leave of absence due to illness or maternity leave, may impact a beginning teacher’s opportunity to complete portfolio requirements within the two-year time frame. Consequently, a teacher may petition to extend the time frame for completing BEST by “rolling back” his or her participation year. Please refer to **Appendix 8 for Documentation of Special Circumstances and Request for an Adjustment in BEST Program Status**. Requests will be reviewed by the BEST Review Committee upon receipt.

Section K: Exemption Policy for the BEST Portfolio Assessment

Beginning teachers whose teaching assignments are sufficiently unique that they cannot complete a portfolio according to the portfolio handbook guidelines may be eligible for an exemption from the portfolio assessment. Exemption requests are made through the BEST Program District Facilitator, who completes an application in conjunction with the beginning teacher and mentor/support team in order to provide documentation regarding the beginning teacher’s teaching assignment. A beginning teacher must be registered as a second or third-year participant in the BEST Program in the 2006-2007 school year to be eligible to submit an exemption application. **A beginning teacher registered as a first-year participant in the BEST Program in the 2006-2007 school year is not eligible to submit an exemption application.**

Exemption requests are reviewed by the BEST Review Committee and notification is provided to the district facilitator and the beginning teacher if the exemption is approved or denied.

Some of the teaching assignments that **may** be eligible for a full exemption include pre-kindergarten elementary or special education teachers, computer technology and teachers of students with severe/profound disabilities.

NOTE: If you are an elementary certified teacher who teaches English language arts *only* or mathematics *only*, you must apply for the partial elementary exemption so that you have approval to do only the literacy or only the numeracy section of the elementary portfolio (see page 22).

Applications for a full or partial exemption are available from BEST District Facilitators.

Section L: Science Safety Self-Assessment (Science Teachers Only)

The BEST Program makes available a CD-ROM version of a science safety assessment activity to evaluate beginning teachers' knowledge of laboratory safety management. This assessment activity is designed to be administered by school districts' science coordinators or science department chairs. Districts are encouraged to require that beginning science teachers complete the science safety activity prior to the end of their participation in BEST. Details about the science safety activity will be provided by their science chairpersons or coordinators.

Figure 2

Connecticut State Department of Education
Beginning Educator Support and Training (BEST) Program
Sample Portfolio Framework

	Sample Data Collection/Commentary	Sample Reflective Questions
Planning	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Select and describe a class of students.• Document a unit of instruction.• Write a short commentary to establish the context for instruction.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• What do you want your students to know and be able to do?• Why is this important?• How/why is this unit connected to prior and future instruction?
Teaching	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Select lessons and/or lab activities.• Videotape the lessons and/or labs.• Write a short commentary reflecting on the videos.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• How did the structure of the lesson create an environment for learning?• What evidence of student learning do you have?• What modifications did you make in your lesson? What would you do differently?
Evaluating Student Learning	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Collect samples of students' work.• Write a short commentary analyzing student achievement.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• What did you learn about the students' knowledge and skills from their performance?• What did the students' performances tell you about your teaching?• How will you modify your teaching based on this knowledge? Why?
Analyzing Your Teaching	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Analyze the effectiveness of your teaching based on the learning of your students.• Describe at least one aspect of your teaching that you would like to improve.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• What did you learn from this unit about your students as learners and about yourself as a teacher?• Overall, what changes would you make in your planning, instruction and/or assessment the next time you teach this unit? Why?

FIGURE 3

Standards for Evaluation of BEST Teaching Portfolios⁵

I. FOUNDATIONAL SKILLS AND COMPETENCIES OF CONNECTICUT'S COMMON CORE OF TEACHING (CCT)

I.	Teachers have knowledge of:
	A. Students
	1. <i>Teachers understand how students learn and develop.</i>
	2. <i>Teachers understand how students differ in their approaches to learning.</i>
	B. Content⁶
	1. <i>Teachers are proficient in reading, writing and mathematics.</i>
	2. <i>Teachers understand the central concepts and skills, tools of inquiry and structures of the discipline(s) they teach.</i>
	C. Pedagogy
	1. <i>Teachers know how to design and deliver instruction.</i>
	2. <i>Teachers recognize the need to vary their instructional methods.</i>
II.	Teachers apply this knowledge by:
	A. Planning
	1. <i>Teachers plan instruction based upon knowledge of subject matter, students, the curriculum and the community.</i>
	2. <i>Teachers select and/or create learning tasks that make subject matter meaningful to students.</i>
	B. Instructing
	1. <i>Teachers establish and maintain appropriate standards of behavior and create a positive learning environment.</i>
	2. <i>Teachers create instructional opportunities that support students' academic, social and personal development.</i>
	3. <i>Teachers use effective verbal, nonverbal and media communications techniques which foster individual and collaborative inquiry.</i>
	4. <i>Teachers employ a variety of instructional strategies that enable students to think critically, solve problems and demonstrate skills.</i>
	C. Assessing and Adjusting
	1. <i>Teachers use various assessment techniques to evaluate student learning.</i>
	D. Reflecting
	1. <i>Teachers continually engage in self-evaluation of the effects of their choices and actions on students and the school community.</i>

II. (CCT) DISCIPLINE-BASED PROFESSIONAL TEACHING STANDARDS

(Refer to *Connecticut's Common Core of Teaching* for standards for teachers of elementary education, English language arts, mathematics, music, physical education, science, social studies, special education, visual arts and world languages).

⁵ The CCT standards for teachers related to professional responsibility are not included in the portfolio scoring criteria.

⁶ Note that prior to issuance of the initial teaching license, prospective teachers must demonstrate essential skills in reading, writing and mathematics through the PRAXIS 1 CBT examination and content knowledge through the PRAXIS II content area examinations (or ACTFL).

APPENDIX 1
District Facilitator List

Dist. #	District	Facilitator	Phone
001	Andover	H. David Griffin	(860) 742-7339
002	Ansonia	Linda O'Brien	(203) 736-5070
003	Ashford	Nancy Johndrow	(860) 429-6419
004	Avon	Lisa Greco	(860) 404-4770
005	Barkhamsted	Joanne Sciola	(860) 379-2729
007	Berlin	Rena Klebart	(860) 828-6581
008	Bethany	Maureen Galla	(203) 393-8994
009	Bethel	Jennifer Weissman	(203) 794-8625
009	Bethel	Darren Wittko	(203) 794-8663
011	Bloomfield	Karen Parks	(860) 769-4205
012	Bolton	Janet Tyler	(860) 643-2768
013	Bozrah	Laurie Swanson	(860) 887-2561
014	Branford	Ann P. Dombroski	(203) 3157801
015	Bridgeport	Kathy Sochacki	(203) 576-7318
017	Bristol	Denise Carabetta	(860) 584-7079
018	Brookfield	Barbara Canavan	(203) 775-7622
019	Brooklyn	Louise Berry	(860) 774-9153
021	Canaan	Thomas Gaisford	(860) 824-0855
022	Canterbury	Sandra Suplicki	(860) 546-6950
023	Canton	Lynn McMullin	(860) 693-7704
024	Chaplin	Marsha Willhoit	(860) 455-9409
025	Cheshire	Scott Detrick	(203) 250-2431
026	Chester	TBA	(860) 526-2417
027	Clinton	Mary Peraro	(860) 664-6500
028	Colchester	Barbara Gilbert	(860) 537-7268
029	Colebrook	Vickki Pac	(860) 379-2179
030	Columbia	Francine Coss	(860) 228-9493
031	Cornwall	Thomas Gaisford	(860) 824-0855
032	Coventry	Judith Richard	(860) 742-4516
033	Cromwell	Paula Talty	(860) 632-6046
034	Danbury	Bob Dylewski	(203) 797-4723
035	Darien	Donna Russo	(203) 655-3981
036	Deep River	TBA	(860) 526-2417
037	Derby	Paul Landolfi	(203) 736-5032
039	Eastford	Linda Loretz	(860) 974-1130
040	East Granby	Maureen Eberly	(860) 653-2541
041	East Haddam	David Scata	(860) 873-5046
042	East Hampton	Kevin Reich	(860) 267-4466
043	East Hartford	Debbie Kaprove	(860) 622-5132
043	East Hartford	Linda Kauffmann	(860) 622-5151
044	East Haven	Frank Meoli	(860) 468-3350

APPENDIX 1
District Facilitator List

Dist. #	District	Facilitator	Phone
045	East Lyme	Karen Costello	(860) 691-4563
046	Easton	Noella Buschbaum	(203) 261-2513
047	East Windsor	Diane Dugas	(860) 623-3346
048	Ellington	Erin McGurk	(860) 896-2300
049	Enfield	Richard Askin	(860) 253-6463
050	Essex	TBA	(860) 526-2417
051	Fairfield	Joan Lowney	(203) 255-8327
052	Farmington	Kerry Jones	(860) 284-1230
053	Franklin	Joan Seidel	(860) 642-7063
054	Glastonbury	Cindy Smith	(860) 652-7897
056	Granby	Susan Domanico	(860) 844-5266
057	Greenwich	Janess Coffina	(203) 625-7454
058	Griswold	Jack Cross	(860) 376-7600
059	Groton	Sally Keating	(860) 572-2120
060	Guilford	Marilynn Sturgess	(860) 453-8202
062	Hamden	Laura Rodriquez	(203) 407-2210
063	Hampton	Marsha Willhoit	(860) 455-9409
064	Hartford	Italia Negroni	(860) 695-8457
065	Hartland	Joanne St. Peter	(860) 653-7207
067	Hebron	Eleanor Cruz	(860) 228-2577
068	Kent	Thomas Gaisford	(860) 824-0855
069	Killingly	Bradford Thompson	(860) 779-6620
071	Lebanon	Bonnie Hanna	(860) 642-7795
072	Ledyard	Cathy Patterson	(860) 464-8776
073	Lisbon	Lisa Plante	(860) 376-2403
074	Litchfield	Edward O'Connell	(860) 567-7520
076	Madison	Anita Rutlin	(203) 245-6300
077	Manchester	Diane Kearney	(860) 647-5075
078	Mansfield	Frederick Baruzzi	(860) 429-3350
079	Marlborough	Salvatore Menzo	(860) 295-6236
080	Meriden	Lois Lehman	(203) 630-4206
083	Middletown	Barbara Senges	(860) 638-1402
084	Milford	Wendy Kopazna	(203) 783-3465
085	Monroe	Richard Canfield	(203) 452-6514
086	Montville	William Hull	(860) 848-1228
088	Naugatuck	Maureen McLaughlin Scott	(203) 720-5265
089	New Britain	Paula Banas	(860) 827-2267
090	New Canaan	Lenore Schneider	(203) 5944628
091	New Fairfield	John Boccuzzi	(203) 312-5755
092	New Hartford	Stephen Nadeau	(860) 379-0713
093	New Haven	Lidia Choma	(203) 946-8441

APPENDIX 1
District Facilitator List

Dist. #	District	Facilitator	Phone
094	Newington	Jeffrey Schumann	(860) 665-8633
095	New London	Wayne Alexander	(860) 447-6000
096	New Milford	Thomas Mulvihill	(860) 354-3235
097	Newtown	Alice Jackson	(203) 426-7617
098	Norfolk	Timothy Lee	(860) 542-5286
099	North Branford	Nancy Brittingham	(203) 484-1455
100	North Canaan	Thomas Gaisford	(860) 824-0855
101	North Haven	Sara-Jane Querfeld	(203) 239-2581
102	North Stonington	Carol Keller	(860) 535-0377
103	Norwalk	Fay Ruotolo	(203) 854-4016
104	Norwich	Rebecca Pellerin	(860) 823-4204
106	Old Saybrook	Sheila Brown	(860) 395-3175
107	Orange	Robert Martino	(203) 891-8022
108	Oxford	Barbara Denver	(203) 881-2599
109	Plainfield	Rena Cadro	(860) 564-6456
110	Plainville	Linda Van Wagenen	(860) 793-3206
111	Plymouth	Peter Lovely	(860) 314-8055
112	Pomfret	Lynda Joly	(860) 928-2718
113	Portland	Kristin Novak	(860) 342-1720
114	Preston	Elaine Lettiere	(860) 887-3113
116	Putnam	Laura Williams	(860) 963-6925
117	Redding	Noella Buschbaum	(203) 261-2513
118	Ridgefield	Karen Dewing	(203) 431-2800
119	Rocky Hill	Laura Boutilier	(860) 258-7704
121	Salem	Fayne Molloy	(860) 859-3988
122	Salisbury	Thomas Gaisford	(860) 824-0855
123	Scotland	Marsha Willhoit	(860) 455-9409
124	Seymour	MaryAnn Mascolo	(203) 888-4564
125	Sharon	Thomas Gaisford	(860) 824-0855
126	Shelton	Lorraine Rossner	(203) 924-1023
127	Sherman	Donna Chapin Dutcher	(860) 355-3793
128	Simsbury	Jan Sands	(860) 713-6838
129	Somers	Jennifer Oliver	(860) 749-2270
131	Southington	Felicia Nocera	(860) 628-3379
132	South Windsor	Ania Czajkowski	(860) 291-1215
133	Sprague	Jean Wierzbinski	(860) 822-8086
134	Stafford	Michael Bednarz	(860) 684-4211
135	Stamford	Mary Jo Pittoni	(203) 977-5558
136	Sterling	Jonathan Lieberman	(860) 564-2728
137	Stonington	Claudia Albert	(860) 572-0506
138	Stratford	Barbara Wood	(203) 385-4272

APPENDIX 1
District Facilitator List

Dist. #	District	Facilitator	Phone
139	Suffield	Mary Greenlaw	(860) 668-3296
140	Thomaston	Kathleen Valla	(860) 283-3036
141	Thompson	Marna Hasz	(860) 923-9377
142	Tolland	Kathryn Eidson	(860) 870-6750
143	Torrington	Gary Lambour	(860) 489-2327
144	Trumbull	Anthony Minotti	(203) 452-4349
144	Trumbull	Karen MacVeigh	(203) 268-5977
145	Union	William Oros	(860) 684-3146
146	Vernon	Deborah Murasso	(860) 870-6003
147	Voluntown	Linda Larsen	(860) 376-2325
148	Wallingford	Dale Wilson	(203) 949-6508
151	Waterbury	Phil Thompson	(203) 597-3446
152	Waterford	Craig Powers	(860) 442-2593
153	Watertown	Sally Rinaldi	(860) 945-4827
154	Westbrook	Katharine Bishop	(860) 399-7925
155	West Hartford	Mary Villanova	(860) 561-6668
156	West Haven	Frank Paolino	(203) 937-4354
157	Weston	Richard Miller	(203) 291-1404
158	Westport	Holly Hageman	(203) 341-1004
159	Wethersfield	Karen Baldwin	(860) 571-8112
160	Willington	David Harding	(860) 429-9391
161	Wilton	Ann Scozzafava	(203) 762-3381
162	Winchester	Deborah Alduini	(860) 379-5956
163	Windham	Diane Summa	(860) 465-2526
164	Windsor	Michael Greenwood	(860) 687-2000
165	Windsor Locks	Georganna Trosky	(860) 292-5032
166	Wolcott	Irene Turek	(203) 879-8183
167	Woodbridge	MaryLou Torre	(203) 392-3542
169	Woodstock	Viktor Toth	(860) 928-0471
201	Regional District # 1	Thomas Gaisford	(860) 824-0855
204	Regional District # 4	TBA	(860) 526-2417
205	Regional District # 5	Sheila Wycinowski	(203) 397-4812
206	Regional District # 6	Paula Cassidy	(860) 868-2223
207	Regional District # 7	Roxanne Puhalski	(860) 379-8525
208	Regional District # 8	Robert Siminski	(860) 228-9417
209	Regional District # 9	Susan Haig	(203) 938-2508
210	Regional District # 10	Eileen Purcell	(860) 673-6163
211	Regional District # 11	Marsha Willhoit	(860) 455-9409
212	Regional District # 12	Susan Ubaldi	(860) 868-7331
213	Regional District # 13	Carol Luckenbach	(860) 349-7227
214	Regional District # 14	Jeff Turner	(203) 263-4306

APPENDIX 1
District Facilitator List

Dist. #	District	Facilitator	Phone
215	Regional District # 15	Lois Lanning	(203) 758-8250
216	Regional District # 16	Jayne Lanphear	(203) 758-4421
217	Regional District # 17	Rita Peretto	(860) 663-1121
218	Regional District # 18	Elizabeth Borden	(860) 434-7238
219	Regional District # 19	Robert Buckley	(860) 487-0877
221	Supervisory Combined District	TBA	(860) 526-2417
223	Shared Services	Clinton Montgomery	(860) 379-8583
241	CREC	Gail Van Dine	(860) 693-4203
242	Education Connection	Sharon Bremner	(860) 567-0863
243	CES	Anthony Maida	(203) 365-8837
244	ACES	Joseph Amenta	(203) 498-6858
245	LEARN	Lynmarie Thompson	(860) 434-4890
246	Project Oceanology	H. Thaxter Tewksbury II	(860) 445-9007
253	EASTCONN	Thomas Cronin	(860) 455-0707
261	Jumoke Academy	Doreen Crawford	(860) 527-0575
263	Odyssey Community School	Renee Hartzog	(860) 645-1234
264	Integrated Day School	June Morrone	(860) 892-1900
265	Interdistrict School for Arts & Communication	Kate Fioravanti	(860) 447-1003
268	Common Ground High School	Oliver Barton	(203) 389-0823
269	The Bridge Academy	Rachel Allison	(203) 336-9999
270	Side by Side Community School	Marie Iannazzi	(203) 857-0306
272	Explorations Charter School	Gail Srebnik	(860) 738-9070
277	Highville Mustard Seed Charter School	Lawrence DiPalma	(203) 287-0528
278	Trailblazers Academy	Steve Pelta	(203) 977-5690
279	Amistad Academy	Sue Harmon	(203) 773-0390
280	New Beginnings Family Academy	Kimberlee Mobley Outlaw	(203) 3842897
281	Elm City College	Rosemary Sulzbach	(203) 773-3223
282	Stamford Academy	Alyson Bucolo	(203) 324-6300
305	American School for Deaf	Fern Reisinger	(860) 570-2300
306	MCCA A.R.T. School	Tracy Young	(203) 847-4814
331	Oak Hill School	Ana Wittig	(860) 242-2274
332	Board of Services & Education for the Blind	Jeanette Haines	(860) 602-4180
336	Department of Correction	Angela Jalbert	(860) 692-7541
347	Connecticut Children's Place School - Riverview Sch	Linda Martin	(860) 292-4048
349	CT DMR	Linda Goodman	(860) 418-6147
531	CT College Children's Program	Sara Radlinski	(860) 439-2920
532	CT Ctr. For Child Dev. (CCCD)	Jon Oddo	(203) 882-8810
752	Benhaven	Sarah Cyr	(203) 937-1005

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District Facilitator List

Dist. #	District	Facilitator	Phone
753	The Foundation School	Michael Nicholson	(203) 877-1426
758	The Institute of Living	Stephanie Zapatka	(860) 545-7359
759	St. Catherine Academy	Victoria Chiluisa	(203) 846-2091
760	St. Francis Care Inpatient	Eileen Hargreaves	(860) 714-2207
762	Center of Progressive Education (COPE)	Gretchen Celestino	(203) 337-4394
763	Stonington Institute School	Pia McNamara	(860) 447-1599
764	Curtis School	Honora Kenney	(203) 237-9526
765	Waterbury Association of Retarded Citizens Preschool	Thomas Melesky	(203) 575-0707
767	Hope Academy	Nicholas Sitro	(203) 876-0864
900	Connecticut Technical High School System	Kim Melillo	(860) 807-2208
900	Bullard Havens Technical High School	Aurea Torresola	(203) 579-6365
900	Eli Whitney Technical High School	Mary Moran	(203) 397-4031
900	H.H.Ellis Technical High School	Lawrence Leboeuf	(860) 774-8511
900	Ella T. Grasso Technical High School	Kerry Bell	(860) 448-0220
900	H.C.Wilcox Technical High School	Russ Duffy	(860) 238-6260
900	W F Kaynor Technical High School	Alex Sinclair	(860) 596-4302
900	Oliver Wolcott Technical High School	Joyce Mowrey	(860) 496-5354
900	J.M.Wright Technical High School	Rebecca Hamman	(203) 324-7363
900	E. C. Goodwin Technical High School	Nilda Espada	(860) 827-7704
900	Howell Cheney Technical High School	Robert Sartoris	(860) 649-5396
900	Emmett O'Brien Technical High School	Thomas Slade	(203) 732-1803
900	Norwich Technical High School	Margaret Ormond	(860) 889-8453
900	Henry Abbott Technical High School	Richard Stebbins	(860) 797-4460
900	Vinal Technical High School	Spencer Clapp	(860) 344-7100
900	A.I.Prince Technical High School	Bill Chaffin	(860) 951-7112
900	Platt Technical High School	John Bruno	(203) 783-5305
900	Windham Technical High School	Fred Ashton	(860) 456-3879
900	Bristol Technical High School	Mary Ellen Pacific	(860) 584-8433
901	Norwich Free Academy	James Landherr	(860) 887-2505
902	Gilbert School	Cynthia Prelli	(860) 379-8521
903	Woodstock Academy	Carol Taylor	(860) 928-6575
938	Arch Bridge School	Susan Schoenbach	(203) 266-8036
939	Natchaug Hospital	Jill Bourbeau	(860) 456-1311
941	Elizabeth Ives School for Special Children	Deborah Lansberry	(203) 281-1148
943	Lorraine D. Foster	Christine Kirschenbaum	(203) 230-4877
945	Yale Child Study Center	Mary Gunsales	(203) 785-3487

APPENDIX 1
District Facilitator List

Dist. #	District	Facilitator	Phone
947	Chapel Haven Inc.	Robert Nurin, Ed.D.	(203) 387-1714
949	The University School	Lynn Ford	(203) 579-0434
951	St. Vincent's Special Needs Center	Gerilyn Durnin	(203) 386-2741
952	New Hope Manor, Inc	Streeter Seidell	(860) 643-2701
958	Intensive Education Academy	Jill O'Donnell	(860) 236-2049
959	STAR, Inc. - Lighting the Way.	Katie Banzhaf	(203) 846-9581
961	Seton Academy	Carole Laskey	(203) 341-4507
963	Middlesex Hospital Clinical Day School	Mindy Otis	(860) 343-8811
965	Cedarhurst School	Mary Donovan-Canas	(203) 764-9319
966	Stepping Stone	Michelle Andrews	(203) 419-0832
967	Touchstone School	Marilyn Robinson	(860) 567-3809
968	Community Child Guidance Clinic School	Peter Francis	(860) 646-0502
969	Gengras Center	Bernie Lindauer	(860) 231-5203
970	Meriden Student Learning Center	Karin Bertero	(860) 294-9139
971	Children's Community Program, Inc.	Gary Lenoce	(203) 314-1419
972	Whitney Hall School	Mike MacDonald	(860) 248-2116
973	Cromwell Children's Home	Cynthia Sarnowski	(860) 635-6010
974	Connecticut Jr. Republic	Michael Conway	(860) 567-9423
975	The Learning Clinic, Brooklyn	Phil Wood	(860) 774-7471
976	Devereux Glenholme School	Sharon Murphy	(860) 868-7377
978	Mount Saint John	Edward McCusker	(860) 343-1336
979	Oakbridge School	Mary Ann Hergenrother, Ed.D.	(203) 849-7514
979	Oakbridge School	Mary Smith	(860) 243-8314
980	Manchester Memorial Clinic Day Sch	Kathleen Tapper	(860) 646-1222
981	Waterford Country School	Sharon Butcher	(860) 442-9454
982	Wheeler Clinic Inc.	John Mattas	(860) 793-3717
983	Village for Families & Child	Paul Mullen	(860) 297-0598
986	Klingberg Family Center	Stephanie Palmieri	(860) 832-5709
987	Villa Maria Education Center	Carol Ann Nawracaj	(203) 322-5886
989	Giant Steps Connecticut School	Megan McCullough Angus	(203) 254-3491
990	Eagle Hill-Southport	Hallie Buckingham	(203) 254-2044
991	Ben Bronz Academy	Christina Lamphere	(860) 586-8709
992	Eagle Hill-Greenwich	Maureen Dumser	(203) 622-9240
993	Rushford Academy	Gary Lenoce	
994	Gray Lodge School	Patricia Buxton	(860) 522-9363
995	Grove School	Robert Eustace	(203) 245-2778
996	Lake Grove-Durham	Lisa Quinn	(860) 349-3467
997	Boys and Girls Village Day School	Kristin Shortell	(203) 877-0300
998	CT Childrens Medical Center	Sharon Edricks	(860) 947-4100

APPENDIX 2

BEST PARTICIPATION CATEGORIES BY CERTIFICATION CODES

Category 1: Portfolio Induction Program (Support and Portfolio Assessment)	Category 2: Support Only	BEST Program NOT available Certification Endorsement Areas NOT participating in the BEST Program
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ English (#015) ➤ Mathematics (#029) ➤ Biology (#030) ➤ Chemistry (#031) ➤ Physics (#032) ➤ Earth Science (#033) ➤ General Science (#034) ➤ Special Education (#065, 165, 265) ➤ Elementary (#001, 002, 003, 004, 005, 006, 008, 013, 112, 113) ➤ Middle School 4-8 (#006, 215, 226, 229, 230, 231, 232, 233, 234, 235) ➤ History/Social Studies (#025, 026) ➤ Art (#042) ➤ Music (#049) ➤ Physical Education (#044) ➤ Bilingual Education* (#009, 902, 915, 926, 929, 930, 931, 932, 933, 934, 966, 967, 968, 969, 970, 971, 972, 973, 974) ➤ World Languages* (#018, 019, 020, 021, 022, 023, 024, 101) <p>*Pilot study of portfolio assessment</p> <p>Note: Anyone teaching under a DSAP in one of the Portfolio Induction subject areas will be registered into BEST for the purpose of receiving support until all requirements for the initial educator or the 90-day certificate have been met. Subsequently, if teaching under an initial certificate or 90-day certificate in a subject area for which a portfolio assessment is applicable, the teacher must participate in and complete requirements of the Portfolio Induction Category.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Business Education (#010) ➤ Vocational Agriculture (#041) ➤ Agriculture (#040) ➤ Health (#043) ➤ Home Economics (#045) ➤ Technology Education (#047) ➤ Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages [TESOL] (#111) ➤ Partially Sighted (#055) ➤ Hearing Impaired (#057) ➤ Blind (#059) ➤ Teacher-Coord. Marketing Educator (#089) ➤ Occupational Subj. in Technical High Schools (#090) ➤ Trade Related Subj. in Technical High Schools 091) ➤ Trade and Industrial Occupations in Comprehensive H.S. (#098) ➤ Health Occupations – Comp. High School (#103) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Driver Education (#035) ➤ Speech and Language Pathologist (#061) ➤ School Library Media Specialist (#062) ➤ School Counselor (#068) ➤ School Psychologist (#070) ➤ School Social Worker (#071) ➤ School Nurse-Teacher (#072) ➤ School Dental Hygienist-Teacher (#073) ➤ Vocational Technical Administrator (#082) ➤ School Business Administrator (#085) ➤ English to Non-English Speaking Adults (#088) ➤ Intermediate Administrator/Supervisor (#092) ➤ Superintendent of Schools (#093) ➤ Reading and Lang. Arts Consultant (#097) ➤ Remedial Reading / Remedial Language Arts (#102) ➤ Teacher Coordinator Co-op Work Edu/Diversified Occup. (#104) ➤ Department Chairperson (#105) ➤ H.S. Credit Diploma Prog. (#106) ➤ Ext. Diploma Prog. Non-credit Mandated Prog. (#107) ➤ Practical Nurse Education Instruction (#108) ➤ Health Occupations V-T Schools (#109)

APPENDIX 3

BEST PROGRAM STAFF DIRECTORY

PROJECT LEADERS, TEACHERS-IN-RESIDENCE and STAFF MEMBERS

Elementary Education

Project Leader:	Christine Sullivan	(860) 713-6828
Consultant:	Ellen Snow	(860) 713-6842
Consultant:	Therese Horn	(860) 713-6842
Consultant:	BG (Betty Gray) Brown	(860) 713-6842
Teacher-in-Residence:	Kim Wachtelhausen	(860) 713-6841

English

Project Leader:	Christine Sullivan	(860) 713-6828
Teacher-in-Residence:	Phil Freemer	(860) 713-6823

Mathematics

Project Leader:	Marlene A. Megos	(860) 713-6786
Teacher-in-Residence:	Frank Newman	(860) 713-6826

Music

Project Leader/Teacher-in-Residence:	Lucille Parkinson	(860) 713-6839
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Physical Education

Project Leader:	Jean Mee	(860) 807-2082
Teacher-in-Residence:	Bonnie Doran	(860) 713-6929

Science

Project Leader:	Michal Lomask	(860) 713-6815
Teacher-in-Residence:	Robert Quilty	(860) 713-6846

Social Studies

Project Leader:	Gail Tomala	(860) 713-6816
Teacher-in-Residence:	Joel Nick	(860) 713-6844

Special Education

Project Leader:	Sharon Fuller	(860) 713-6843
Teacher-in-Residence:	Patty Hart	(860) 713-6843

Visual Arts

Project Leader/Teacher-in-Residence:	Jeanette Gumbulevich	(860) 713-6848
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World Languages

Project Leader/Teacher-in-Residence:	Jan Ferrier Sands	(860) 713-6838
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BEST Program Office

General Questions (860) 713-6820

BEST Program Manager

Beverly Hartstone (860) 713-6811

BEST Program Coordinator

Jane Gionfrido (860) 713-6812

APPENDIX 4

Field Staff Representative at the Regional Educational Service Centers (RESCs)

RESC	Phone	Fax
ACES Diane Conway Jackie Chorney 205 Skiff Street Hamden, CT 06517	(203) 407-4449 (203) 407-4437	(203) 407-4590
CES Lyn Nevins 25 Oakview Drive Trumbull, CT 06611	(203) 365-8858	(203) 365-8846
CREC Grace Levin 111 Charter Oak Avenue Hartford, CT 06106	(860) 509-3612	(860) 509-3699
EASTCONN Grace Levin Windham Mills Bldg. 1 322 Main Street Willimantic, CT 06226	(888) 531-9910 or (860) 455-0707	(860) 456-7845
Education Connection Laura Patterson 355 Goshen Road P.O. Box 909 Litchfield, CT 06759	(203) 791-1904	(203) 778-8076
Education Connection Laura Patterson 345 Main Street Danbury, CT 06810	(203) 791-1904	(203) 778-8076
LEARN Ellen Dalton Eastport North 10 Vista Drive Old Lyme, CT 06371 (mailing address: 44 Hatchetts Hill Road)	(860) 434-4890	(860) 434-4899

APPENDIX 5

TEACHING PORTFOLIO AUTHENTICITY SIGN-OFF

This teaching portfolio has been submitted as part of completing the Beginning Educator Support and Training (BEST) Program and meeting requirements for eligibility for the Provisional Educator Certificate. This attestation is an acknowledgment that the ultimate responsibility for compiling the portfolio documentation (including writing the commentaries) lies with the beginning teacher; however, beginning teachers are *encouraged* to seek assistance, input and feedback from the mentor, principal or other colleagues in preparing for the portfolio assessment.

Attestation by beginning teacher

- I am the sole author of the teacher commentaries and other written responses to portfolio questions and forms in this portfolio;
- I have primary responsibility for teaching the students/classes profiled in this teaching portfolio;
- I have removed the names (and all other identifying information) of all students from student work and commentaries and have not included any confidential student records in this portfolio;
- The students represented in this portfolio are students assigned to me as part of my regularly scheduled classes (during school hours) and I have not reorganized or reconfigured my classes for the purpose of documenting my teaching in this portfolio;
- The videotape(s) submitted show(s) me teaching the students/classes profiled in this teaching portfolio;
- The student work included in the documentation is the authentic work of the students in the portfolio class during the portfolio unit and it has not been altered or modified in any way (except to remove names and provide feedback); and
- Appropriate citations have been made for all published and/or Internet materials used during the portfolio unit.

Name (printed)

Signature of beginning teacher

Date

Attestation by the Principal

I have reviewed the portfolio and to the best of my knowledge, the statements above are accurate.

Name (printed)

Signature of Principal

Date

APPENDIX 6

**APPLICATION TO ELECT TO SUBMIT A TEACHING PORTFOLIO
IN YEAR ONE OF PARTICIPATION**

NAME: _____

SOCIAL SECURITY #: _____

DISTRICT: _____ SCHOOL: _____

PORTFOLIO SUBJECT AREA: _____

NOTE: This option is not available to beginning teachers subject to the portfolio completion standard (i.e., bilingual and other completion standard cohorts as identified on page 27 of the Guide to the BEST Program).

By submission of this form, I am submitting notification that I will submit a portfolio in this subject area indicated above postmarked on or before May 15, 2007.

Signature of Beginning Teacher

Date

Approved by:

Signature of Principal

Date

Signature of BEST District Facilitator

Date

Please return this form no later than ***March 1 of your first year to:***

***Jane Gionfrido, BEST Program Office
Connecticut State Department of Education
P.O. Box 2219
Hartford, CT 06145
Or fax to (860) 713-7028***

A written confirmation of your request will be sent to your school address.

APPENDIX 7

DOCUMENTATION OF CHANGE IN TEACHING ASSIGNMENT and REQUEST FOR AN ADJUSTMENT IN BEST PROGRAM STATUS

A beginning teacher who has a significant change in teaching assignment (*one which impacts the BEST portfolio participation area*) may petition to extend the time frame for completing BEST by “rolling back” his or her “participation year.”

This form is to be completed **ONLY** if you have had a teaching assignment change from year one to year two or year two to year three of your BEST Program participation **which impacts your BEST portfolio participation content area.**

Examples of changes that qualify:

- from science in year one (2005-06) to mathematics in year two (2006-07); or
- from English/language arts in year one to social studies in year two.

Examples of changes that do not qualify for this extension:

- from chemistry in year one to biology in year two;
- from history in year one to geography in year two; or
- from Grade 1 elementary in year one to Grade 5 elementary in year two.

These examples do not result in a change in portfolio participation subject area.

*If you wish to request an adjustment in your participation year in order to extend the time frame for your completion of the BEST Program, please complete and submit the form **attached**. If approved, a new registration confirmation letter will be sent to you to confirm the change in your BEST participation year.*

NOTE: This adjustment allows a **rollback of only one year**, i.e., from year two **back** to year one or from year three **back** to year two.

APPENDIX 7 (continued)

**DOCUMENTATION OF CHANGE IN TEACHING ASSIGNMENT and
REQUEST FOR AN ADJUSTMENT IN BEST PROGRAM STATUS**

Please complete only if you have had a **change in teaching assignment** from year one to year two or from year two to year three of your BEST participation which impacts your BEST Portfolio participation subject area. **By submitting this form**, you are requesting to extend your time frame for the completion of BEST by “rolling back” your BEST participation status (as described on the cover sheet of this application form).

NOTE: This adjustment allows a **rollback of only one year**, i.e., from year two **back** to year one or from year three **back** to year two.

Name: _____

Social Security #: _____

District: _____ School: _____

Address: _____

BEST Participation Record:

Year-One Teaching Assignment: _____ Year: _____
(content area)

Year-Two Teaching Assignment: _____ Year: _____
(content area)

Year-Three Teaching Assignment: _____ Year: _____
(content area)

I verify that this information accurately reflects this teacher’s BEST participation record and teaching assignment change.

Signature of BEST District Facilitator Date

Signature of Beginning Teacher Date

Please return this form to:
Jane Gionfrido, BEST Program Office
Connecticut State Department of Education
P.O. Box 2219, Hartford, CT 06145
Or fax to (860) 713-7028

APPENDIX 8

DOCUMENTATION OF SPECIAL CIRCUMSTANCES AND REQUEST FOR AN ADJUSTMENT IN BEST PROGRAM STATUS

BEST is designed as a two-year induction program with a third year available if a teacher *does not meet standards* on a portfolio submitted in year two, **OR** if the teacher *cannot submit in year two due to extenuating circumstances*. Examples of such extenuating circumstances are a break in employment or leave of absence due to illness, maternity leave or other significant circumstances.

Because special circumstances may impact a beginning teacher's opportunity to complete these requirements within the two-year time frame, BEST policy is to review each request and, pending approval of the BEST Review Committee, allow a teacher to elect to **roll back** his or her BEST participation status, thereby providing an additional year.

For example, if a beginning teacher is out for an extended period of time during her second year of participation due to maternity leave, the teacher may request to postpone the submission of the portfolio to the following year and maintain year-two status.

In order to request an adjustment to your BEST participation status, please complete and submit the form attached and include medical or district documentation as appropriate. If an adjustment of your BEST Program status is approved, a new registration letter will be sent to you to confirm this change in your BEST participation year.

APPENDIX 8 (continued)

**DOCUMENTATION OF SPECIAL CIRCUMSTANCES AND REQUEST
FOR AN ADJUSTMENT OF BEST PROGRAM STATUS**

Name: _____

Social Security #: _____

District: _____ School: _____

Complete for the following registration years as applicable:

BEST Registration Year for **2005-06** as noted on your BEST registration confirmation letter (please check one):

____ Year 1 ____ Year 2 ____ Year 3

BEST Registration Year for **2006-07** as noted on your BEST registration confirmation letter (please check one):

____ Year 1 ____ Year 2 ____ Year 3

Please check reason for Request of Adjustment in BEST Program Status:

(please attach documentation of circumstances if appropriate):

☐ Illness

☐ Break in teaching service

☐ Maternity leave/child care

☐ Other; please explain below

**IF A LEAVE OF ABSENCE FROM TEACHING HAS OCCURRED, PLEASE PROVIDE THE
BEGINNING AND END DATES OF YOUR LEAVE (GIVE ESTIMATE OF TIME IF NECESSARY). YOUR
REQUEST WILL NOT BE PROCESSED WITHOUT THIS INFORMATION**

Signature of Beginning Teacher

Date

Signature of BEST District Facilitator

Date

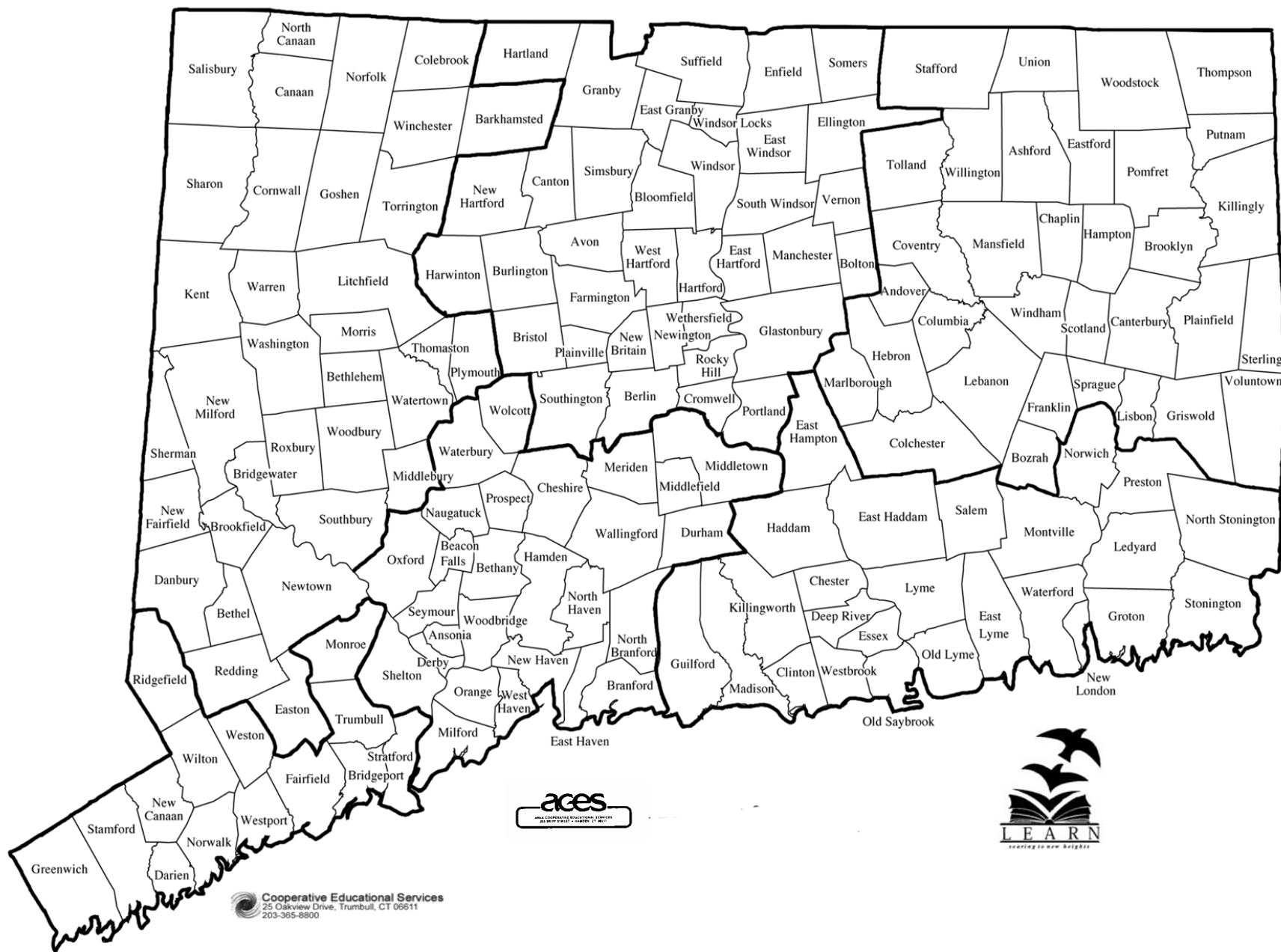
Signature of Superintendent

Date

This request will be reviewed by the BEST Review Committee. If approved, your program participation year will be adjusted (to roll back your BEST participation status) to provide for an extension of the time frame for the completion of BEST. A written response to this application will confirm or deny your request.

Please return this form to:

**Jane Gionfrido / BEST Review Committee
Connecticut State Department of Education
P.O. Box 2219, Hartford, CT 06145
or fax to 860-713-7028**



APPENDIX 10

**Connecticut's
Common Core of Teaching**

State of Connecticut

M. Jodi Rell, *Governor*

State Board of Education

Allan B. Taylor, Chairperson
Janet M. Finneran, Vice Chairperson
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Timothy J. McDonald

Valerie F. Lewis (ex officio)
Commissioner of Higher Education

George A. Coleman
Interim Commissioner of Education

It is the policy of the Connecticut State Board of Education that no person shall be excluded from participation in, denied the benefits of, or otherwise discriminated against under any program, including employment, because of race, color, religious creed, sex, age, national origin, ancestry, marital status, sexual orientation, mental retardation or past/present history of mental disorder, learning disability or physical disability.